[Template:About](/wiki/Template:About" \o "Template:About) **Health** is the level of functional or [metabolic](/wiki/Metabolic) efficiency of a living [organism](/wiki/Organism). In [humans](/wiki/Human) it is the ability of individuals or communities to adapt and self-manage when facing physical, mental or social challenges.[[1]](#cite_note-1) The [World Health Organization](/wiki/World_Health_Organization) (WHO) defined health in its broader sense in its 1948 constitution as "a state of complete physical, mental, and social [well-being](/wiki/Well-being) and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."[[2]](#cite_note-2)[[3]](#cite_note-3) This definition has been subject to controversy, in particular as lacking operational value and because of the problem created by use of the word "complete".[[4]](#cite_note-4)[[5]](#cite_note-5)[[6]](#cite_note-6) Other definitions have been proposed, among which a recent definition that correlates health and personal satisfaction.[[7]](#cite_note-7)[[8]](#cite_note-8) Classification systems such as the [WHO Family of International Classifications](/wiki/WHO_Family_of_International_Classifications), including the [International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health](/wiki/International_Classification_of_Functioning,_Disability_and_Health) (ICF) and the [International Classification of Diseases](/wiki/International_Classification_of_Diseases) (ICD), are commonly used to define and measure the components of health.

## Contents

* 1 History[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]
* 2 Determinants[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]
  + 2.1 Potential issues[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]
* 3 Mental health[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]
* 4 Maintaining health[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]
  + 4.1 Diet[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]
  + 4.2 Exercise[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]
  + 4.3 Sleep[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]
  + 4.4 Role of science[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]
  + 4.5 Role of public health[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]
  + 4.6 Self-care strategies[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]
* 5 Occupational health[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]
* 6 See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]
* 7 References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]
* 8 External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

## History[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

The definition of health has evolved over time. In keeping with the [biomedical](/wiki/Biomedical) perspective, early definitions of health focused on the theme of the body's ability to function; health was seen as a state of normal function that could be disrupted from time to time by [disease](/wiki/Disease). An example of such a definition of health is: "a state characterized by anatomic, physiologic, and psychological integrity; ability to perform personally valued family, work, and community roles; ability to deal with physical, biologic, psychological, and social stress".[[9]](#cite_note-9) Then, in 1948, in a radical departure from previous definitions, the [World Health Organization (WHO)](/wiki/World_Health_Organization) proposed a definition that aimed higher, linking health to [well-being](/wiki/Well-being), in terms of "physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity".[[10]](#cite_note-10) Although this definition was welcomed by some as being innovative, it was also criticized as being vague, excessively broad, and was not construed as measurable. For a long time it was set aside as an impractical ideal and most discussions of health returned to the practicality of the biomedical model.[[11]](#cite_note-11) Just as there was a shift from viewing disease as a state to thinking of it as a process, the same shift happened in definitions of health. Again, the WHO played a leading role when it fostered the development of the health promotion movement in the 1980s. This brought in a new conception of health, not as a state, but in dynamic terms of resiliency, in other words, as "a resource for living". The 1984 WHO revised definition of health defined it as "the extent to which an individual or group is able to realize aspirations and satisfy needs, and to change or cope with the environment. Health is a resource for everyday life, not the objective of living; it is a positive concept, emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities".[[12]](#cite_note-12) Thus, health referred to the ability to maintain homeostasis and recover from insults. Mental, intellectual, emotional, and social health referred to a person's ability to handle stress, to acquire skills, to maintain relationships, all of which form resources for resiliency and independent living.[[11]](#cite_note-11) Since the late 1970s, the [federal Healthy People Initiative](https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/tools-and-resources/Federal-Prevention-Initiatives) has been a visible component of the United States’ approach to improving population health. In each decade, a new version of Healthy People is issued ([see history of healthy people](https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/about/History-and-Development-of-Healthy-People)), featuring updated goals and identifying topic areas and quantifiable objectives for health improvement during the succeeding ten years, with assessment at that point of progress or lack thereof. Progress has been limited for many objectives, leading to concerns about the effectiveness of Healthy People in shaping outcomes in the context of a decentralized and uncoordinated US health system. Healthy People 2020 gives more prominence to health promotion and preventive approaches, and adds a substantive focus on the importance of addressing societal determinants of health. A new expanded digital interface facilitates use and dissemination rather than bulky printed books as produced in the past. The impact of these changes to Healthy People will be determined in the coming years.[[13]](#cite_note-13) Systematic activities to prevent or cure health problems and promote good health in humans are undertaken by [health care providers](/wiki/Health_care_provider). Applications with regard to animal health are covered by the [veterinary sciences](/wiki/Veterinary_medicine). The term "healthy" is also widely used in the context of many types of non-living organizations and their impacts for the benefit of humans, such as in the sense of [healthy communities](/wiki/Healthy_community_design), [healthy cities](/wiki/Healthy_city) or [healthy environments](/wiki/Healthy_environment). In addition to [health care](/wiki/Health_care) interventions and a person's surroundings, a number of other factors are known to influence the health status of individuals, including their background, lifestyle, and economic, social conditions, and spirituality; these are referred to as "determinants of health." Studies have shown that high levels of stress can affect human health.[[14]](#cite_note-14)

## Determinants[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also)

Generally, the context in which an individual lives is of great importance for both his health status and quality of their life. It is increasingly recognized that health is maintained and improved not only through the advancement and application of [health science](/wiki/Health_science), but also through the efforts and intelligent [lifestyle](/wiki/Lifestyle_(sociology)) choices of the individual and society. According to the [World Health Organization](/wiki/World_Health_Organization), the main determinants of health include the social and economic environment, the physical environment, and the person's individual characteristics and behaviors.[[15]](#cite_note-15) More specifically, key factors that have been found to influence whether people are healthy or unhealthy include the following:[[15]](#cite_note-15)[[16]](#cite_note-16)[[17]](#cite_note-17)[Template:Col-begin](/wiki/Template:Col-begin) [Template:Col-2](/wiki/Template:Col-2)

* Income and [social status](/wiki/Social_status)
* [Social support](/wiki/Social_support) networks
* [Education](/wiki/Education) and [literacy](/wiki/Literacy)
* Employment/working conditions
* [Social environments](/wiki/Social_environments)
* [Physical environments](/wiki/Environment_(biophysical))

[Template:Col-2](/wiki/Template:Col-2)

* Personal health practices and [coping skills](/wiki/Coping_skills)
* Healthy [child development](/wiki/Child_development)
* [Biology](/wiki/Human_biology) and [genetics](/wiki/Genetics)
* [Health care services](/wiki/Healthcare)
* [Gender](/wiki/Gender)
* [Culture](/wiki/Culture)

[Template:Col-end](/wiki/Template:Col-end) [right|thumb|210px|](/wiki/File:Smallpox_eradication_team.jpg)[Donald Henderson](/wiki/Donald_Henderson) as part of the CDC's [smallpox](/wiki/Smallpox) eradication team in 1966. An increasing number of studies and reports from different organizations and contexts examine the linkages between health and different factors, including lifestyles, environments, [health care organization](/wiki/Health_care_system), and [health policy](/wiki/Health_policy) – such as the 1974 [Lalonde report](/wiki/Lalonde_report) from Canada;[[17]](#cite_note-17) the [Alameda County Study](/wiki/Alameda_County_Study) in California;[[18]](#cite_note-18) and the series of [World Health Reports](/wiki/World_Health_Report) of the World Health Organization, which focuses on [global health](/wiki/Global_health) issues including access to health care and improving [public health](/wiki/Public_health) outcomes, especially in [developing countries](/wiki/Developing_countries).[[19]](#cite_note-19) The concept of the "*health field,*" as distinct from [medical care](/wiki/Medicine), emerged from the Lalonde report from Canada. The report identified three interdependent fields as key determinants of an individual's health. These are:[[17]](#cite_note-17)\* Lifestyle: the aggregation of personal decisions (i.e., over which the individual has control) that can be said to contribute to, or cause, illness or death;

* Environmental: all matters related to health external to the [human body](/wiki/Human_body) and over which the individual has little or no control;
* Biomedical: all aspects of health, physical and mental, developed within the human body as influenced by genetic make-up.

The maintenance and promotion of health is achieved through different combination of physical, [mental](/wiki/Mental_health), and social well-being, together sometimes referred to as the *"health triangle."*[[20]](#cite_note-20)[[21]](#cite_note-21) The WHO's 1986 [*Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion*](/wiki/Ottawa_Charter_for_Health_Promotion) further stated that health is not just a state, but also "a resource for everyday life, not the objective of living. Health is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities."[[22]](#cite_note-22) Focusing more on lifestyle issues and their relationships with functional health, data from the Alameda County Study suggested that people can improve their health via [exercise](/wiki/Exercise), enough [sleep](/wiki/Sleep), maintaining a healthy [body weight](/wiki/Body_weight), limiting [alcohol](/wiki/Alcohol) use, and avoiding [smoking](/wiki/Smoking).[[23]](#cite_note-23) Health and [illness](/wiki/Illness) can co-exist, as even people with multiple chronic diseases or terminal illnesses can consider themselves healthy.[[24]](#cite_note-24) The environment is often cited as an important factor influencing the health status of individuals. This includes characteristics of the [natural environment](/wiki/Natural_environment), the [built environment](/wiki/Built_environment), and the [social environment](/wiki/Social_environment). Factors such as clean [water](/wiki/Water) and [air](/wiki/Air), adequate [housing](/wiki/House), and safe communities and [roads](/wiki/Road_traffic_safety) all have been found to contribute to good health, especially to the health of infants and children.[[15]](#cite_note-15)[[25]](#cite_note-25) Some studies have shown that a lack of neighborhood recreational spaces including natural environment leads to lower levels of personal satisfaction and higher levels of [obesity](/wiki/Obesity), linked to lower overall health and well being.[[26]](#cite_note-26) This suggests that the positive health benefits of natural space in urban neighborhoods should be taken into account in [public policy](/wiki/Public_policy) and land use.

[Genetics](/wiki/Genetics), or inherited traits from parents, also play a role in determining the health status of individuals and populations. This can encompass both the [predisposition](/wiki/Genetic_predisposition) to certain diseases and health conditions, as well as the habits and behaviors individuals develop through the lifestyle of their [families](/wiki/Families). For example, genetics may play a role in the manner in which people cope with [stress](/wiki/Stress_(biology)), either mental, emotional or physical. For example, [obesity](/wiki/Obesity) is a very large problem in the United States[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) that contributes to bad mental health and causes stress in a lot of people's lives. (One difficulty is the issue raised by the [debate](/wiki/Nature_versus_nurture) over the relative strengths of genetics and other factors; interactions between genetics and environment may be of particular importance.)

### Potential issues[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

[Template:Citation style](/wiki/Template:Citation_style)

There are a lot of types of health issues common with many people across the globe. [Disease](/wiki/Disease) is one of the most common. According to GlobalIssues.org, approximately 36 million people die each year from non-communicable (not contagious) disease including cardiovascular disease cancer, diabetes, and chronic lung disease (Shah, 2014).[[27]](#cite_note-27) As for communicable diseases, both viral and bacterial, [AIDS](/wiki/AIDS)/[HIV](/wiki/HIV), [tuberculosis](/wiki/Tuberculosis), and [malaria](/wiki/Malaria) are the most common also causing millions of deaths every year (2014).

Another health issue that causes death or contributes to other health problems is malnutrition majorly among children. One of the groups malnutrition affects most is young children. Approximately 7.5 million children under the age of 5 die from malnutrition, and it is usually brought on by not having the money to find or make food (2014).

Bodily injuries are also a common health issue worldwide. These injuries, including broken bones, fractures, and burns can reduce a person's quality of life or can cause fatalities including infections that resulted from the injury or the severity injury in general (Moffett, 2013).[[28]](#cite_note-28) Some contributing factors to poor health are lifestyle choices. These include smoking cigarettes, which according to LIVESTRONG.com kills 443,000 people each year (2013). It also can include a poor diet, whether it is overeating or an overly constrictive diet. Inactivity can also contribute to health issues and also a lack of sleep, excessive alcohol consumption, and neglect of oral hygiene (2013). There are also genetic disorders that are inherited by the person and can vary in how much they affect the person and when they surface (2013).

The one health issue that is the most unfortunate because the majority of these health issues are preventable is that approximately 1 billion people lack access to health care systems (Shah, 2014). It is easy to say that the most common and harmful health issue is that a lot of people do not have access to quality remedies.[[29]](#cite_note-29)[[30]](#cite_note-30)

## Mental health[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) The [World Health Organization](/wiki/World_Health_Organization) describes mental health as "a state of [well-being](/wiki/Well-being) in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community".[[31]](#cite_note-31) Mental Health is not just the absence of mental illness.<ref name= Bos>[Template:Cite journal](/wiki/Template:Cite_journal)</ref>

Mental illness is described as 'the spectrum of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral conditions that interfere with social and emotional well-being and the lives and productivity of people. Having a mental illness can seriously impair, temporarily or permanently, the mental functioning of a person. Other terms include: 'mental health problem', 'illness', 'disorder', 'dysfunction'. (Hungerford et al. 2012).

Roughly a quarter of all adults 18 and over in the US suffer from a diagnosable mental illness. Mental illnesses are the leading cause of disability in the US and Canada. Examples include, [schizophrenia](/wiki/Schizophrenia), [ADHD](/wiki/ADHD), [major depressive disorder](/wiki/Major_depressive_disorder), [bipolar disorder](/wiki/Bipolar_disorder), [anxiety disorder](/wiki/Anxiety_disorder), [post-traumatic stress disorder](/wiki/Post-traumatic_stress_disorder) and [autism](/wiki/Autism_spectrum).[[32]](#cite_note-32) Many teens suffer from mental health issues in response to the pressures of society and social problems they encounter. Some of the key mental health issues seen in teens are: [depression](/wiki/Depression_(mood)), [eating disorders](/wiki/Eating_disorders), and [drug abuse](/wiki/Drug_abuse). There are many ways to prevent these health issues from occurring such as communicating well with a teen suffering from mental health issues. Mental health can be treated and be attentive to teens' behavior.[[33]](#cite_note-33)

## Maintaining health[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

Achieving and maintaining health is an ongoing process, shaped by both the evolution of [health care](/wiki/Health_care) knowledge and practices as well as personal strategies and organized interventions for staying healthy.

### Diet[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [210px|thumb|right|Percentage of overweight or obese population in 2010, Data source: OECD's iLibrary,](/wiki/File:Overweight_or_obese_population_OECD_2010.png) <http://stats.oecd.org>, retrieved 2013-12-12[[34]](#cite_note-34)

[210px|thumb|right|Percentage of obese population in 2010, Data source: OECD's iLibrary,](/wiki/File:Obese_population_OECD_2010.png) <http://stats.oecd.org>, retrieved 2013-12-13[[35]](#cite_note-35) An important way to maintain your personal health is to have a healthy diet. A healthy diet includes a variety of plant-based and animal-based foods that provide [nutrients](/wiki/Nutrients) to your body. Such nutrients give you energy and keep your body running. Nutrients help build and strengthen bones, muscles, and tendons and also regulate body processes (i.e. [blood pressure](/wiki/Blood_pressure)). The [food guide pyramid](/wiki/Food_guide_pyramid) is a pyramid-shaped guide of healthy foods divided into sections. Each section shows the recommended intake for each food group (i.e. Protein, Fat, Carbohydrates, and Sugars). Making healthy food choices is important because it can lower your risk of heart disease, developing some types of [cancer](/wiki/Cancer), and it will contribute to maintaining a healthy weight.[[36]](#cite_note-36) The [Mediterranean diet](/wiki/Mediterranean_diet) is commonly associated with health-promoting effects due to the fact that it contains some bioactive compounds like [phenolic compounds](/wiki/Phenolic_compound), [isoprenoids](/wiki/Isoprenoid) and [alkaloids](/wiki/Alkaloid).[[37]](#cite_note-37)

### Exercise[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) Physical exercise enhances or maintains [physical fitness](/wiki/Physical_fitness) and overall health and wellness. It strengthens muscles and improves the [cardiovascular system](/wiki/Cardiovascular_system).

### Sleep[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) Sleep is an essential component to maintaining health. In children, sleep is also vital for growth and development. Ongoing [sleep deprivation](/wiki/Sleep_deprivation) has been linked to an increased risk for some chronic health problems. In addition, sleep deprivation has been shown to correlate with both increased susceptibility to illness and slower recovery times from illness.[[38]](#cite_note-38) In one study, people with chronic insufficient sleep, set as six hours of sleep a night or less, were found to be four times more likely to catch a cold compared to those who reported sleeping for seven hours or more a night.[[39]](#cite_note-39) Due to the role of sleep in regulating [metabolism](/wiki/Sleep_and_metabolism), insufficient sleep may also play a role in [weight gain](/wiki/Weight_gain) or, conversely, in impeding [weight loss](/wiki/Weight_loss).[[40]](#cite_note-40) Additionally, in 2007, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, which is the cancer research agency for the [World Health Organization](/wiki/World_Health_Organization), declared that "shiftwork that involves [circadian](/wiki/Circadian_rhythm) disruption is probably [carcinogenic](/wiki/Carcinogen) to humans," speaking to the dangers of long-term nighttime work due to its intrusion on sleep.[[41]](#cite_note-41) In 2015, the National Sleep Foundation released updated recommendations for sleep duration requirements based on age and concluded that "Individuals who habitually sleep outside the normal range may be exhibiting signs or symptoms of serious health problems or, if done volitionally, may be compromising their health and well-being."[[42]](#cite_note-42) {| class="wikitable sortable" |+ |- ! Age and condition ! Sleep Needs |- | Newborns (0–3 months) | 14 to 17 hours |- | Infants (4–11 months) | 12 to 15 hours |- | Toddlers (1–2 years) | 11 to 14 hours |- | Preschoolers (3–5 years) | 10 to 13 hours |- | School-age children (6–13 years)     |   9 to 11 hours |- | Teenagers (14–17 years) |   8 to 10 hours |- | Adults (18–64 years) |   7 to 9 hours |- | Older Adults (65 years and over) |   7 to 8 hours |}

### Role of science[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|210px|The Dutch Public Health Service provides medical care for the natives of the](/wiki/File:Nieuws_uit_Indonesië,_het_werk_van_de_Nederlandse_dienst_voor_Volksgezondheid_Weeknummer_46-21_-_Open_Beelden_-_16742.ogv) [Dutch East Indies](/wiki/Dutch_East_Indies), May 1946 [Health science](/wiki/Health_science) is the branch of science focused on health. There are two main approaches to health science: the study and [research](/wiki/Research) of the [body](/wiki/Human_body) and health-related issues to understand how humans (and animals) function, and the application of that knowledge to improve health and to prevent and cure [diseases](/wiki/Disease) and other physical and mental impairments. The science builds on many sub-fields, including [biology](/wiki/Biology), [biochemistry](/wiki/Biochemistry), [physics](/wiki/Physics), [epidemiology](/wiki/Epidemiology), [pharmacology](/wiki/Pharmacology), [medical sociology](/wiki/Medical_sociology). Applied health sciences endeavor to better understand and improve human health through applications in areas such as [health education](/wiki/Health_education), [biomedical engineering](/wiki/Biomedical_engineering), [biotechnology](/wiki/Biotechnology) and [public health](/wiki/Public_health).

Organized interventions to improve health based on the principles and procedures developed through the health sciences are provided by practitioners trained in [medicine](/wiki/Medicine), [nursing](/wiki/Nursing), [nutrition](/wiki/Nutrition), [pharmacy](/wiki/Pharmacy), [social work](/wiki/Social_work), [psychology](/wiki/Psychology), [occupational therapy](/wiki/Occupational_therapy), [physical therapy](/wiki/Physical_therapy) and other [health care professions](/wiki/Health_care_provider). Clinical practitioners focus mainly on the health of individuals, while public health practitioners consider the overall health of communities and populations. [Workplace wellness](/wiki/Workplace_wellness) programs are increasingly adopted by companies for their value in improving the health and well-being of their employees, as are [school health services](/wiki/School_health_services) in order to improve the health and well-being of children.

### Role of public health[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also)

[thumb|160px|right|Postage stamp,](/wiki/File:NewZealand-Stamp-1933-Health.jpg) [New Zealand](/wiki/New_Zealand), 1933. Public health has been promoted – and depicted – in a wide variety of ways. Public health has been described as "the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organized efforts and informed choices of society, organizations, public and private, communities and individuals."[[43]](#cite_note-43) It is concerned with threats to the overall health of a community based on [population health](/wiki/Population_health) analysis. The population in question can be as small as a handful of people or as large as all the inhabitants of several continents (for instance, in the case of a [pandemic](/wiki/Pandemic)). Public health has many sub-fields, but typically includes the interdisciplinary categories of [epidemiology](/wiki/Epidemiology), [biostatistics](/wiki/Biostatistics) and [health services](/wiki/Health_services). [Environmental health](/wiki/Environmental_Health), [community health](/wiki/Community_health), [behavioral health](/wiki/Behavioral_health), and [occupational health](/wiki/Occupational_health) are also important areas of public health.

The focus of public health interventions is to prevent and manage diseases, injuries and other health conditions through surveillance of cases and the [promotion of healthy behavior](/wiki/Health_promotion), [communities](/wiki/Healthy_community_design), and (in aspects relevant to human health) [environments](/wiki/Environmental_protection). Its aim is to prevent health problems from happening or re-occurring by implementing [educational programs](/wiki/Health_education), developing [policies](/wiki/Health_policy), administering services and conducting [research](/wiki/Research).[[44]](#cite_note-44) In many cases, treating a disease or controlling a [pathogen](/wiki/Pathogen) can be vital to preventing it in others, such as during an [outbreak](/wiki/Outbreak). [Vaccination](/wiki/Vaccination) programs and distribution of [condoms](/wiki/Condom) to prevent the spread of [communicable diseases](/wiki/Communicable_disease) are examples of common preventive public health measures, as are educational campaigns to promote vaccination and the use of condoms (including overcoming resistance to such).

Public health also takes various actions to limit the health disparities between different areas of the [country](/wiki/Country) and, in some cases, the [continent](/wiki/Continent) or [world](/wiki/World). One issue is the access of individuals and communities to health care in terms of financial, geographical or socio-cultural constraints to accessing and using services.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) Applications of the public [health system](/wiki/Health_system) include the areas of [maternal](/wiki/Maternal_health) and child health, health services administration, emergency response, and prevention and control of [infectious](/wiki/Infectious_disease) and [chronic diseases](/wiki/Chronic_disease).

The great positive impact of public health programs is widely acknowledged. Due in part to the policies and actions developed through public health, the 20th century registered a decrease in the mortality rates for [infants](/wiki/Infants) and [children](/wiki/Child) and a continual increase in [life expectancy](/wiki/Life_expectancy) in most parts of the world. For example, it is estimated that life expectancy has increased for Americans by thirty years since 1900,[[45]](#cite_note-45) and worldwide by six years since 1990.[[46]](#cite_note-46)

### Self-care strategies[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|170px|A lady washing her hands c. 1655](/wiki/File:Borch_Lady_washing_hands.jpg) Personal health depends partially on the active, passive, and assisted cues people observe and adopt about their own health. These include personal actions for preventing or minimizing the effects of a disease, usually a chronic condition, through [integrative care](/wiki/Disease_management_(health)). They also include personal [hygiene](/wiki/Hygiene) practices to prevent infection and illness, such as [bathing](/wiki/Bathing) and [washing hands](/wiki/Washing_hands) with soap; [brushing and flossing teeth](/wiki/Oral_hygiene); storing, preparing and handling [food safely](/wiki/Food_safety); and many others. The information gleaned from personal [observations of daily living](/wiki/Observations_of_Daily_Living) – such as about sleep patterns, exercise behavior, nutritional intake and environmental features – may be used to inform personal decisions and actions (*e.g.*, "I feel tired in the morning so I am going to try sleeping on a different pillow"), as well as clinical decisions and treatment plans (*e.g.*, a patient who notices his or her shoes are tighter than usual may be having exacerbation of left-sided heart failure, and may require diuretic medication to reduce fluid overload).[[47]](#cite_note-47) Personal health also depends partially on the social structure of a person's life. The maintenance of strong [social relationships](/wiki/Social_relation), [volunteering](/wiki/Volunteering), and other social activities have been linked to positive mental health and also increased longevity. One American study among [seniors](/wiki/Old_age) over age 70, found that frequent volunteering was associated with reduced risk of dying compared with older persons who did not volunteer, regardless of physical health status.[[48]](#cite_note-48) Another study from Singapore reported that volunteering retirees had significantly better [cognitive performance](/wiki/Cognition) scores, fewer [depressive symptoms](/wiki/Mood_disorder), and better mental well-being and life satisfaction than non-volunteering retirees.[[49]](#cite_note-49) Prolonged [psychological stress](/wiki/Psychological_stress) may negatively impact health, and has been cited as a factor in [cognitive impairment](/wiki/Cognitive_impairment) with aging, depressive illness, and expression of disease.[[50]](#cite_note-50) [Stress management](/wiki/Stress_management) is the application of methods to either reduce stress or increase tolerance to stress. [Relaxation techniques](/wiki/Relaxation_technique) are physical methods used to relieve stress. Psychological methods include [cognitive therapy](/wiki/Cognitive_therapy), [meditation](/wiki/Meditation), and [positive thinking](/wiki/Positive_thinking), which work by reducing response to stress. Improving relevant skills, such as [problem solving](/wiki/Problem_solving) and [time management](/wiki/Time_management) skills, reduces uncertainty and builds confidence, which also reduces the reaction to stress-causing situations where those skills are applicable.

## Occupational health[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) In addition to [safety](/wiki/Safety) risks, many jobs also present risks of disease, illness and other long-term health problems. Among the most common [occupational diseases](/wiki/Occupational_diseases) are various forms of [pneumoconiosis](/wiki/Pneumoconiosis), including [silicosis](/wiki/Silicosis) and [coal worker's pneumoconiosis (black lung disease)](/wiki/Coalworker's_pneumoconiosis). [Asthma](/wiki/Occupational_asthma) is another [respiratory illness](/wiki/Respiratory_illness) that many workers are vulnerable to. Workers may also be vulnerable to skin diseases, including [eczema](/wiki/Eczema), [dermatitis](/wiki/Dermatitis), [urticaria](/wiki/Urticaria), [sunburn](/wiki/Sunburn), and [skin cancer](/wiki/Skin_cancer).<ref name=hse>[HSE (Health and Safety Executive of Great Britain) Skin at work](http://www.hse.gov.uk/skin/) Retrieved on June 20, 2009</ref><ref name=niosh-skin>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> Other occupational diseases of concern include [carpal tunnel syndrome](/wiki/Carpal_tunnel_syndrome) and [lead poisoning](/wiki/Lead_poisoning).

As the number of [service sector](/wiki/Service_sector) jobs has risen in developed countries, more and more jobs have become [sedentary](/wiki/Sedentary_lifestyle), presenting a different array of health problems than those associated with [manufacturing](/wiki/Manufacturing) and the [primary sector](/wiki/Primary_sector). Contemporary problems, such as the growing rate of [obesity](/wiki/Obesity) and issues relating to [stress](/wiki/Stress_(psychological)) and [overwork](/wiki/Overwork) in many countries, have further complicated the interaction between work and health.

Many governments view occupational health as a social challenge and have formed public organizations to ensure the health and safety of workers. Examples of these include the [British](/wiki/United_Kingdom) [Health and Safety Executive](/wiki/Health_and_Safety_Executive) and in the [United States](/wiki/United_States), the [National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health](/wiki/National_Institute_for_Occupational_Safety_and_Health), which conducts research on occupational health and safety, and the [Occupational Safety and Health Administration](/wiki/Occupational_Safety_and_Health_Administration), which handles regulation and policy relating to worker safety and health.<ref name=niosh-site>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref><ref name=osha-site>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref><ref name=hse-site>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

[Template:Wikipedia books](/wiki/Template:Wikipedia_books)

* [Global burden of disease](/wiki/Global_burden_of_disease)
* [Health workforce](/wiki/Health_workforce)
* [History of medicine](/wiki/History_of_medicine)
* [Human enhancement](/wiki/Human_enhancement)
* [One Health](/wiki/One_Health)
* [Primary health care](/wiki/Primary_health_care)

## References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

[Template:Wiktionary](/wiki/Template:Wiktionary) [Template:Wikiquote](/wiki/Template:Wikiquote) [Template:Wikivoyage](/wiki/Template:Wikivoyage) [Template:Library resources box](/wiki/Template:Library_resources_box)

* [World Health Organization](http://www.who.int)
* [UK National Health Service](http://www.nhs.uk)
* [OECD Health Statistics](http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=HEALTH)
* [Health and Medical Information](http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/govpubs/us/health.htm) from the University of Colorado

[Template:Portal bar](/wiki/Template:Portal_bar)

[Template:Authority control](/wiki/Template:Authority_control)

[Template:DEFAULTSORT:Health](/wiki/Template:DEFAULTSORT:Health) [Category:Health](/wiki/Category:Health) [Category:Personal life](/wiki/Category:Personal_life) [Category:Health promotion](/wiki/Category:Health_promotion) [Category:Articles containing video clips](/wiki/Category:Articles_containing_video_clips) [Category:Main topic classifications](/wiki/Category:Main_topic_classifications) [Category:Articles in Wikipedia Primary School Project SSAJRP](/wiki/Category:Articles_in_Wikipedia_Primary_School_Project_SSAJRP)